

## ANGUS COUNCIL

## COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE – 20 January 2015

## Friday Night Youth Work Projects

**BACKGROUND**

There are Friday Night (youth work/youth diversion) Projects currently operating in Arbroath, Forfar, Kirriemuir and Birkhill and Montrose. Projects in Carnoustie and Monifieth are currently in abeyance due to staff changes and difficulties but will restart in 2015. An allocation of funding has been set aside for Brechin and there are plans to begin a small project in spring 2015.

The funding for Friday Night Projects comes from two sources. An allocation of £150,000 over three years (£50,000 per annum) was approved by the Strategic Policy Committee in December 2012 (Report Number 706/12) as part of a wider package of preventative spend projects. This allocation is available for one further financial year; 2015-16. The balance of funding required is provided through the Planning and Place Division's revenue budget.

The Youth Joint Action Group of the Children's and Learning Partnership, now reconstituted as the Children's and Young People Delivery Group agreed a formula against which funding would be allocated to each area for the three year period from April 2013. Some of the projects pre-date this stream of funding and the formula has tried to ensure that there is a more equitable distribution of available resources, which takes some account of need and delivery model.

Not all of the projects operate in the same way. They have evolved to reflect local circumstances and meet differing needs:

- The Montrose project is led by Montrose YM on behalf of the Montrose Children's and Learning Partnership and relies significantly on voluntary effort with support from a number of other services and agencies.
- In Kirriemuir the project is led by Voluntary Action Angus and utilises a mix of volunteers and paid youth workers
- The Forfar project is now to be run as a partnership with VAA managing the funding and Forfar Area Partnership leading the project
- In Birkhill the project was initiated by the Monifieth Children's and Learning Partnership but is now operated by a community run group
- Projects in Monifieth, Carnoustie and Arbroath are led by subgroups of the respective Children and Learning Partnerships, with responsibilities for planning and delivery shared by a number of participating partners

Each project submits an annual report describing the activities it has provided, the impact it has made and the ways in which it has utilised funding. However, the quality and depth of reporting has been variable. In order to make the reports more robust, the Children's and Learning Delivery Group (previously the Youth JAG) has revised the reporting format and the new format will be used for the 2014/15 financial year. The intention here is to gain a greater degree of consistency and help develop a more reliable view of the effectiveness of the projects and their respective delivery models.

Over the last 2 years, Voluntary Action Angus and the Council's Communities Team have coordinated some networking activity between the projects. Staff and volunteers from projects have welcomed this and it to be very useful. This activity has allowed for some informal interim reporting to take place. Reports at the most recent networking meeting in August 2014 confirmed that projects remain popular with weekly attendance ranging from 40 in smaller projects to 130 in bigger towns. Most projects are targeting young people from P7 to S2 but there are good examples of older young people becoming involved as volunteers in almost all areas with many gaining accreditation through Saltire Awards for their volunteering contributions.

The range of activities offered by projects includes sports coaching (football, basketball and badminton), arts and crafts and games. Some projects have also provided some specialist input from services such as Tayside Council and Alcohol, Cair Scotland and Fire Scotland.

The current funding arrangement for Friday Night Projects will come to an end in March 2016 when there will be a significant challenge in sustaining the projects. In the next year development work will be undertaken with projects to explore alternative models of both delivery and funding. Some early steps have been taken in this direction, but the pace of this work will be increased to try and ensure that viable plans are in place by the end of the funding period.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

Friday Night Projects remain popular with young people and appear to be making a positive contribution to communities. However, more robust evaluation is required to complement work to develop delivery models and secure resources that will allow projects to continue in the longer term.

Contact for further information:

Vivien Smith, Head of Planning and Place

Email: [CommunitiesBusinessSupport@angus.gov.uk](mailto:CommunitiesBusinessSupport@angus.gov.uk).